

The appearance of "Muddy Little York" at this time is thus described by the American historian, Mr. Lossing, in his "Field-Book of the War of 1812":—"The little village of York was then chiefly at the bottom of the bay, near a marshy flat through which the Don, coming down from beautiful fertile valleys, flowed sluggishly into Lake Ontario. It gradually grew to the westward, and, while deserting the Don, it wooed the Humber, once a famous salmon stream, that flows into a broad bay two or three miles west of the town. In that direction stood the remains of old Fort Toronto. On the shore eastward, between the present new barracks and the city were two batteries, the most easterly one being in the form of a crescent. A little further east, on the border of a deep ravine and small stream, was a picketed block-house, some entrenchments with cannon, and a garrison of about 800 men, under Major-General Sheaffe. On Gibraltar Point, the extreme western end of the peninsula that embraced the harbour with its protecting arm, was a small block-house; and another, seen in the engraving, stood on the high east bank of the River Don, just beyond the present bridge at the eastern terminus of King and Queen Streets. These defences had been strangely neglected. Some of the cannon were without trunnions; others destined for the war-vessel then on the stocks, were imbedded in frozen mud, and half covered with snow. Fortunately for the garrison, the *Duke of Gloucester* was then in port undergoing repairs, and her guns furnished some armament for the batteries. These, however, only amounted to a few six-pounders. The whole country around, excepting a few spots on the lake shore, was covered with a dense forest." Such was York in the month of April, 1813.

General Dearborn himself being in indifferent health, he remained on board the *Madison*, the Commodore's flag-ship, and placed the landing forces under the command of Briga-